Claims:

1. A one-step method of forming slit and preformed sheet for production of expanded mesh sheet from a deformable strip comprising the steps of concurrently slitting and forming at least a portion of said strip contained within imperforate border portions to provide a plurality of longitudinally extending wire-like components, said components comprising elongated slit segments deformed out of the plane of the strip and alternately slit segments retained in the plane of the strip, said elongated slit segments being severed from laterally adjacent segments and said border portions and being substantially convexly shaped from the plane of the strip whereby slit segments in laterally adjacent components extend from opposite sides of the plane of the strip, and said alternately slit segments retained in the plane of the strip together define nodes extending laterally at least the width of said one or more wire-like components across the said portion of the strip.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1 in which equispaced perforations are formed in opposite edge border portions of the strip.

3. A method as claimed in claim 2 in which the equispaced perforations are formed in a subsequent step.

4. A method as claimed in claim 2 additionally comprising expanding the slit and preformed sheet for production of expanded mesh sheet by rotary expansion.

5. A method as claimed in claim 1, in which the deformable strip is lead or lead alloy.

6. An apparatus for forming elongated alternately slit segments in deformable strip comprising a pair of opposed rolls each having a plurality of spaced discs having opposite side walls and circumferential, equally spaced, convexly shaped tool surfaces alternating with substantially flat surfaces, said discs having radial notches formed in the opposite sidewalls of alternate circumferential flat surfaces, whereby peripheral surfaces of opposing rolls are adapted to interact on deformable strip passing therebetween to slit and form convex segments and alternate nodes in said strip by intermeshing of said shaped tool surfaces.

7. An apparatus for forming elongated alternately slit segments in deformable strips as claimed in claim 6, additionally comprising a third roll having a substantially smooth

peripheral surface in opposition to one of the pair of opposed rolls, and equispaced circumferential protuberances formed at each end of the third roll of the opposed roll for engagement with a mating circumferential recess in the other roll, whereby the third roll and a said first opposed roll are adapted to interact on deformed strip passing therebetween for providing edge centred means on the side edges of the deformed strip.

8. An apparatus as claimed in claim 7, one of said third roll or opposed roll additionally comprising a central circumferential ridge for engagement with a mating circumferential recess in the other roll for roll-forming a longitudinal central ridge in the deformed strip.

9. An expanded mesh sheet produced by the method of claim 4 in which the expanded mesh sheet is lead alloy for use as a battery electrode.

10. A lead acid battery having a plurality of battery electrodes as claimed in claim 9.